

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 JIDDA 03335 061510Z

44

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 /026 W

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R 061350Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4582

S E C R E T JIDDA 3335

EXDIS

DEPT PASS DIA FOR VICE ADMIRAL DE POIX ONLY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, SA, EG

SUBJ: DISCUSSION WITH PRINCE SULTAN RE C-130'S

REF: JIDDA 3196

1. TOLD SULTAN AUGUST 5 I WANTED RAISE AGAIN WITH HIM MATTER WHICH IF NOT PROPERLY MANAGED OFFERED DANGEROUS OPPORTUNITY FOR ENEMIES OF SAUDI ARABIA AND US TO CAUSE SIGNIFICANT DIFFICULTIES BETWEEN US. REMINDED HIM OF OUR PREVIOUS CONVERSATION ON THIS TOPIC (REFTEL) AND HIS ASSURANCES THAT IN TRIPS MADE BY SAUDI AIR FORCE C-130'S OUTSIDE OF SAUDI ARABIA THERE HAD BEEN NO RPT NO TRANSFER OF POSSESSION WHICH MIGHT BE CONSIDERED CONTRARY TO UNDERSTANDINGS BETWEEN TWO GOVTS.

2. RECENTLY, HOWEVER, NEW EVIDENCE HAD REACHED US INDICATING ACTIVITIES OF PLANES BEING MANAGED IN WAY THAT COULD RAISE QUESTIONS AS TO WHO CONTINUING RETAIN CONTROL. FOR EXAMPLE, ONE PLANE HAD TURNED UP IN JIDDA WITH FOREIGN AIR FORCE MARKINGS ON IT. THIS COULD BE VERY TROUBLESOME INDEED AS EVIDENCE OF TRANSFER OF POSSESSION. SIMPLE SOLUTION TO WHOLE PROBLEM AS I SAW IT, WAS TO BRING PLANES BACK TO SAUDI ARABIA, REPAINT THEM PROPERLY, AND KEEP THEM HERE. I URGED THAT HIS HIGHNESS HAVE THIS DONE PROMPTLY.

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3. SULTAN CONFESSED THAT AN ERROR HAD BEEN MADE IN PAINTING PLANES WITH EGYPTIAN MARKINGS AND THAT THIS WAS TO BE RECTIFIED. MEANWHILE, AIRCRAFT WOULD, HOWEVER, BE REQUIRED UNDERTAKE HUMANITARIAN MISSIONS FROM TIME TO TIME TO FOREIGN COUNTRIES, BUT THERE WAS NO QUESTION OF TRANSFER OF POSSESSION. PLANES WOULD ALWAYS RETURN TO KINGDOM. NO SPECIFIC PLANE OR PILOT WILL BE ASSIGNED TO DUTY IN EGYPT. PLANES WILL ONLY BE SENT WHEN THEY ARE NEEDED FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES.

4. COMMENT: AT PRESENT ONLY ONE AIRCRAFT APPEARS TO BE AWAY. OTHER HAS RETURNED AND IS NOW UNDERGOING REGULAR PHASE MAINTENANCE HERE. WE WILL CONTINUE FOLLOW SITUATION CLOSELY TO ASSURE POSITION TAKEN BY SULTAN IS INDEED IMPLEMENTED.
THACHER

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED DIA.

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

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